



A Currier and Ives print of the '60's

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HOME FOR THANKSGIVING

Gone are the pie-laden pantry shelves, the jingling sleighbells, the gathering of aunts and uncles and cousins by the score, with which our forefathers were accustomed to celebrate the feasts of the family. Yet though manners and modes may change, families remain the foundation of our life today, with much the same basic hopes and fears and common ties as those with which the Pilgrims faced that first Thanksgiving more than three hundred years ago. This issue of Survey Graphic tries to show some of the common patterns that run through the lives of all of us against our own common background as human beings and as Americans, and to point ahead to some of the goals that lie before the pioneers of today.

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A Song to March To

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WHEN doctors are talking of the medical information to cope with the new modern complexities of marriage and parenthood, and psychiatrists of mental analyses, social workers of economic difficulties, alienists of the dark problems of unbalance, what can a mere wife and mother and housekeeper have to add? Certainly nothing definite and concrete in detail . . . if for no other reason than that life has taught her a distrust of too-carefully laid out programs of any sort when human beings are concerned.

And yet there is something I feel like calling out, in my unprofessional way, with my heart in my voice. *Nothing is more needed as a foundation for these personal relationships than a state of mind, a song to march to, some stirring fanfare, the sort of bright brazen challenge which from the beginning of time has stirred human blood to action.* "The song of the Lord began with trumpets," says the Bible somewhere. In the scientific thinking which is an absolute prerequisite of accurate advance, we cannot forget the wholehearted joy in the possibilities of success which is the only thing that makes possible any advance at all, accurate or fumbling.

As I look around me, in these years, upon the anxious thoughtful faces of people who are thinking about modern marriage and parenthood, and read the apprehensive screeds of many of those who write about the changes in those institutions, I am dismayed by the absence of what I had thought one virtue always to be counted on in our pioneer America—the virtue of courage and cheer and hopefulness in turning the face towards the future and away from the past. I am astonished by the careworn taking thought as to the dangers and difficulties, and the absence of hurrahs over the prize to be won. We are all brought up on the story of the Pilgrims and of the stoutheartedness of those ancestors of ours who did not, one of them, turn back towards the established past and, frightened by the unknown, return to England when the Mayflower returned. What has become of that pioneering spirit, and that other one which sent strong men and women adventurously out to conquer the new continent?

In all the talk about the unknown future of marriage and

parenthood I hear no echo of the instinctive rush of high spirits over obstacles to conquer, none of our old traditional delight in exploring and taming the unknown. We seem to be heavily stooping over the broken pieces of the past, rather than plunging our hands eagerly into the plastic clay of the future.

Is it possible that we don't recognize the situation as the moral equivalent of the material one faced by our forefathers, out of which they created our present world, materially so marvelous, wherein materially we are so astonishingly at our ease? Here we stand, facing a new world of human relationship, as new as America was to those English people three centuries ago. There it lies, waiting for us to shape it into the background of strong and healthy and happy lives for our descendants. Even if we would we cannot retreat into the old world of the past. There is no moral Mayflower that could possibly carry us back to bring up our families along the lines fixed by the old traditions. We must move forward, pushed by the irresistible momentum of change; we might at least, even the most timid or thought-taking among us, make a virtue of necessity, and step off boldly into the unknown world, with that alert self-possessed eye which alone can discern and shape the new possibilities in a new region.

THERE is no denying that we are leaving behind us some sweet and pleasant aspects of life which will never be seen again. So did the Pilgrims. Never were they or their descendants to know again the pleasant comfortable leisure of well-to-do people attended and served by a class who were resigned to being considered only half human. The pleasant repose of the older home when the women and the younger generation had no thought of being allowed wholly human dignity or freedom of action, is gone forever. There is no denying that the rule of autocracy is simpler and often quieter than any other form of organization. But we cannot return to it even if we would and in our hearts we know that we would now find something so ignoble and base as the foundations of such peace and quietness that we could not endure it, either as autocrat or as serf.

No, we cannot live ourselves back to the old quietly ordered world with its unquestioned traditions and standards.